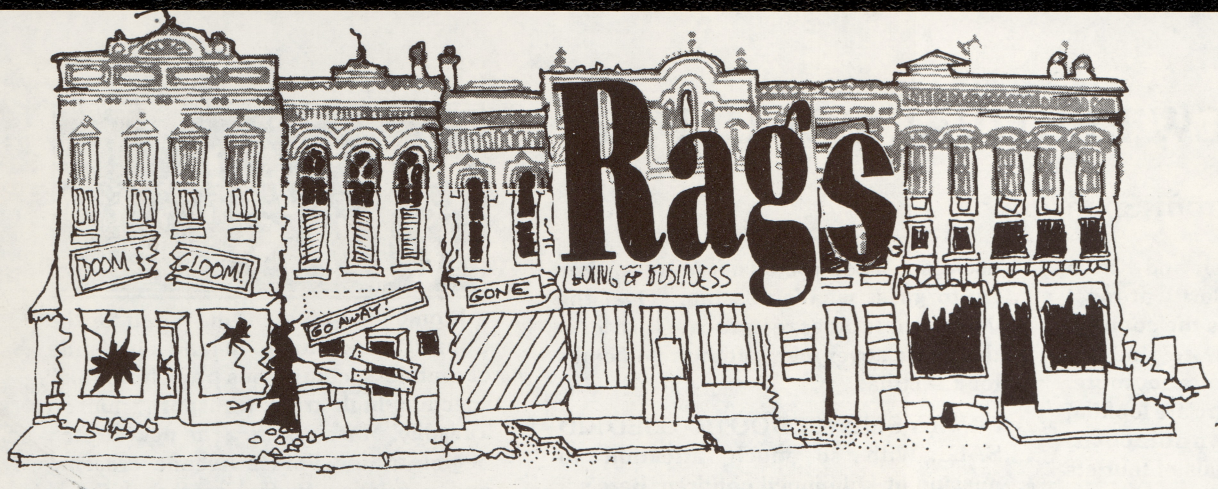


Rags

FREE 100% RAG CONTENT

APRIL 1986
Foundation
Thursday, 3rd, 8 p.m.
Association
Thursday, 17th, 7:30 p.m.
...in the Old Caboose

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Down And Out In Depot Town
DECREPIT DEPOT SETS NEW THEME FOR BLOCK

In an effort to coordinate the architectural style of their old railroad district, building owners and business managers in Ypsilanti's Depot Town have decided to replicate the condition of their business district's run-down (but historic) depot as the dominant theme for what was becoming a popular and trendy shopping center.

The abandoned one-story building on the northeast side of the tracks has been deteriorating for more than a quarter of a century and its disrepair often gets more attention than its adjacent neighbors' efforts to preserve and repair their buildings. Therefore, many of Depot Town's properties are launching an all-out program of 'trashing' to meld in to an aura of fallen-down-at-the-sidewalks helplessness.

- No one washes their windows any more, and customers must peer through the grime to see if the shop is really open. Shop owners have staggered their hours to make it as difficult as possible for customers to tour the entire area in one day's shopping.
- Remodelers are putting up used perma-stone facades and badly lettered signs to bring back the dark days of economic depression.
- Designers are painting cracks, cobwebs and dirt into every corner of the block and garbage cans are now moved to the front door.
- Polyester replicas of trash and refuse are placed in strategic walkways with strict orders not to remove.
- Junk cars are left at curbside and manequins of shoplifters, drunks and panhandlers are placed at strategic sidewalk intersections.
- Whenever possible, upstairs windows are left open with raggedy curtains blowing from them. Tape recordings of motorcycle gang fights are broadcast from balconies.
- Shopkeepers have begun 'dressing down' in order to look like vagrants when they appear on the sidewalks and ask folks for spare change as they pass.
- One clever shop has boarded over its windows, and most patrons have to come around to the back door to get in.

As this retro-replication movement spreads, it is anticipated that the Michigan Central Railroad Depot at Ypsilanti will soon be the handsomest building in town – without anyone ever having to touch the structure with hammer, paint brush or bull-dozer.

City Hall nabobs and optimistic architects continue to grind out sunny press releases about cleaning up the old passenger station and making it into a restaurant, but wiser neighbors have decided to follow Amtraks' cost-saving example and echo the decline and fall of respectability.

NO MORE JAZZ UNTIL JUNE

The 1986 WEMU/DTA Jazz Series ended last month and music lovers will have to trudge clear up Aubree's Second Floor or wait until June 28 and then go all the way over to the west end of the block for the Frog Island Jazz Festival. It's just not fair.

TOO MUCH SNOW!

Boy, is it a lot of work keeping these sidewalks clean all winter! It seems like every time we turned around there was another snowfall – sometimes with ice – and we had to work hard to clean our walks and help all those customers get into our shops. It's been a miserable winter!

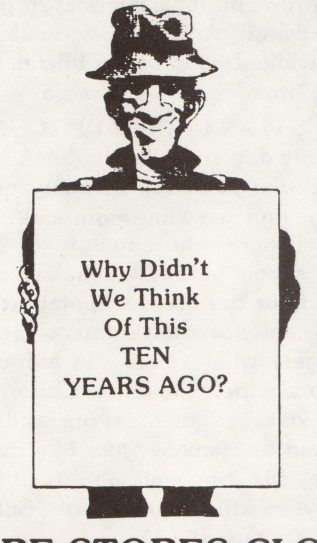
BAD NEWS!

Some say that this little monthly Rag is pretty foolish all year 'round, but the April issue has always been a bit more so.

With our April '86 front page (only), we will try to emulate THE PRESS, THE NEWS and all our bigger brothers and sisters by printing some of our neighborhoodly items in their style.

PARKING PROBLEMS

It's almost impossible to find a parking place on Cross and River Streets anymore. Even the large gravel lot next to Frog Island is often full. On the weekends people have to park in Ann Arbor and take a taxi back to Depot Town. What a bummer. Why, in the old days, you could park anywhere you wanted down here.



MORE STORES CLOSE

And Everything Nice is gone. Jacqueline's Boutique closed up, too. Now & Then went out of business. Chef In The House never opened. THE Market's pills and vitamins have moved down the street. What's more, the restaurants are so crowded you often have to stand in line. The neighborhood just isn't what it used to be.

TOTALLY NEW FESTIVAL CONCEPTS

In Search of Non-Profit Sponsors

The Annual Frog Squash and Kitten Toss have lost their popularity at most home town festivals across the country. Many kids don't even like to ride the twenty-four hour Pony Torture any more. Festivals all over the country are looking for new, cheap, home-grown attractions which will draw huge crowds of tourists to their abandoned cities. Here are a few suggestions:

WORLD'S LARGEST CARILLON CONCERT - Every church organist in town is connected via an AT & T conference call to the 'director' who orchestrates Handel's "Water Music" to be played through the various church bell towers across town. Whoever has an A-flat bell is instructed by phone to ring it atjust the right time, etc. All traffic in town is stopped and the world's biggest stereo concert takes place. Protestants and Catholics will have to cooperate on this one, or we'll have to cut the piece at the Coda.

INTERSTATE PUNCH AND JUDY SHOW: Giant weather balloons are formed into puppet shapes similar to those in big city parades and filled with helium. Ground-operated strings are maintained from behind the woods near the Chamber of Commerce promotional billboard on the local interstate highway. Cross-country truckers can watch the show while driving by, and listen to the dialog broadcast on CB radio.

LET'S PLAY GROWN-UP TOUR: It's kids-only day at the 'adult' book stores, so the tots can play at being mature citizens and see what Mom and Dad do when they're old enough to shave. Public school busses will make a circuit throughout the area, stopping at each 'adult' center of entertainment where the managers will explain the mores and customs of their clientele. Children will be encouraged to dress up and wear make-up and smoke, just like the 'big people' do. Souvenir photos of knees and elbows will be handed out. Coloring books are possible too.

WELCOME TO OUR TOWN WEEK: an in-depth home tour - Everyone in town goes on vacation for the same week and the local Visitors and Convention Bureau rents out each house and apartment throughtout the City to out-of-towners. The new residents pretend they've lived there forever and hold garage sales of anything they find in their house which they think is silly or useless. When the owners return, they try to guess what's missing. Over the years, whole cities reciprocate with folks they have never met, but their golf clubs look familiar.

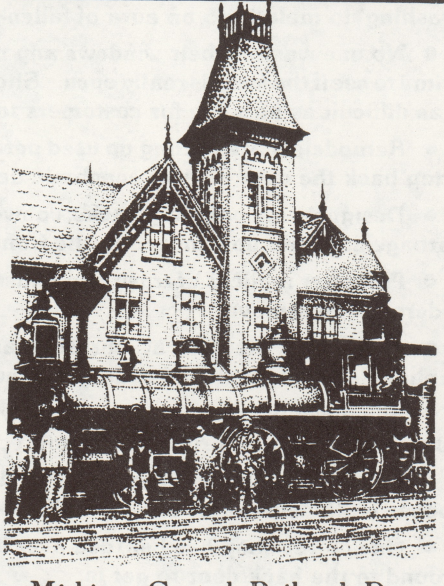
FAMILY SERVICE BOOTH - USED KID SALE: With so much attention to missing or kidnapped children, here's a way for a service-oriented organization to tap a whole, new point of view. Families who can't stand their children any more may bring them to a centrally located booth for half-day viewing sessions to see if anyone wants to adopt them. Legal services will be on hand to facilitate easy transfers from family to family. Short trial visits may be set up if the children are not especially good looking or talented. Families are not encouraged to bring surly tots with radios stuck in their ears.

RE-ART SERVICE: Bring your purchases from last year's festival to this trendy crafts booth and have them updated to this year's fad. Monkey puppets will be re-sewn into pot holders. Beer can hats into disco jewelry. Driftwood clocks can be fashioned into wood and polyester napkin rings. Weed pots are quickly ground into gravel and used for stuffing in bean-bag Cabbage Patch babies. Day-glo paintings on velvet will be taken from their frames and made into cafe curtains, ties, torreador pants or sport coats.

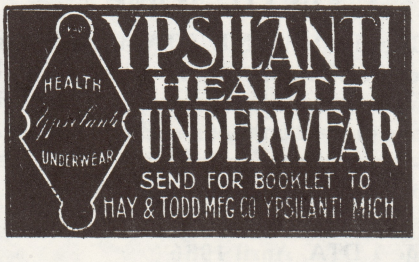
COMMUNITY TANNING/SAFETY CENTER: Most festivals are held in the hottest part of the summer and a lot of folks don't wear much clothing when touring the local exhibits of canned goods and carved deer antlers. Such semi-nudity, however comfortable, causes a great increase in traffic accidents, due to inattentive drivers. Why not set aside just one city park and herd all these naturalists into one not-too-shady area so that they might cop as many rays as they can. Lotions, balms, salves, sunglasses and hats with visors could be imprinted with catchy sayings and slogans. A viewing stand for non-participants might even create a highly popular money-maker.

NOTICE: All booths must be non-profit, local organizations and no loud-speakers are allowed. Most local festivals want a cut of the profits to help pay for promotion, insurance, porta-johns, and lawsuits for bad taste.

It only took an hour and a half for the Conrail track team to unload a half mile of seamless, continuous track from thier specially-built track-transport train on Tuesday, March 25th. The new stretch begins at the Forest Avenue crossing and continues to the center of Cross Street. Seeing that much iron unloaded like so much wet spaghetti drew quite a crowd. They will be installing the continuous track in early April. Bring a lawn chair and watch the action in Depot Town.



Michigan Central Railroad Depot
YPSILANTI 1864



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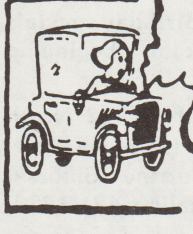
on orders over $4.00



CITY RADIATOR
110 N. River
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
483-2248

IKE'S
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Phone 483-1238

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THE STRONGEST IN MINERALIZATION AND MOST PERFECTLY NEUTRALIZED WATER IN THE WORLD.

Water from the Owen Well Contains Most Wonderful Medicinal Properties, from which Several different Products are prepared:

SALTS—Giving nearly a *fac simile* of the water itself.
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MINERAL WATER BITTERS—Free from alcohol, and possessing all intrinsic merits of the water.
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MINERAL WATER SOAP—For the Toilet and Bathing it is unequalled as a remedial agent for all irritations of the Skin and Scalp. So mild is its action that even the delicate skin of an infant is benefited by its use. The complexion is beautified, and the hair rendered soft and glossy by the use of the Soap, which owes its wonderful emollient and curative properties to the fact that it contains only pure material and over 20 per cent. of Mineral Salts.

THE PARAGON Is deodorized at the Well, carbonized, bottled and shipped to all parts of the Country.

THE OWEN MINERAL WATER
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Cancer, Scrofula, Salt Rheum and all Skin Diseases, Blood Poisoning, Hemorrhoids or Bleeding Piles, Constipation, Dyspepsia, Hay Fever, Catarrh, Asthma, Bronchial Affections, Cholera Morbus or Summer Complaint, Rheumatism and Sciatica, Pleurisy, Neuralgia, Bright's Disease, Diabetes, Erysipelas, Sick Headache, Mercurial Poisoning, Sore Throat, Inflamed Eyes, Ivy Poisoning, Bee Stings, Bruises, Cuts, Burns, Sprains, etc., etc.

T. C. OWEN, Sole Bottler of the Celebrated YPSILANTI PARAGON. Mineral Water and Ginger Ale.
6] Ypsilanti, · · Mich.

DTA 20 MARCH 1986

Minutes of FEBRUARY meeting approved as read.

TREASURY -	
General	3932.80
Rag	11.70
Jazz	4965.50
Special -	
Caboose	978.00
Halloween	112.33
Billboard	1197.24
Boomer Days	201.47
Sub Total	94.56
GRAND TOTAL	$8981.16

INSURANCE - paid up to Frog Island, Finns has us covered up to first day of Festival. Coverage agreement carries until January 1987.

CONFERENCE - on Tourism in Kalamazoo April 13 - 15. Approved $300 for Meadows and McKeever to attend.

ARTRAIN - budget has been submitted to Festival Committee for approval. Decide on expenses of second train for catered dinners when car owners respond with costs.

EARLY ENGINE EXPO - ad in Stemgas Publication. Many requests for information as a result. Investigate placing this near Farmers' Market.

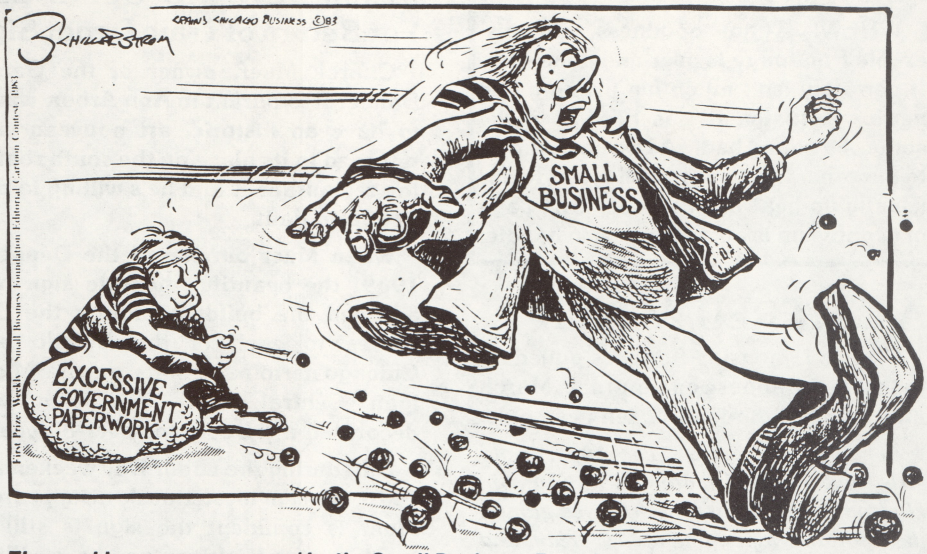
ALLEY UP-DATE - 1983 City plan is about to be completed. Much misinformation has circulated due to its delay.

CABOOSE REPAIR - continues. Defer temporary repairs for permanent repairs.

JAZZ - Approximately $500 profit from March concert. There is more competition and an older crowd. Investigate 2 a.m. closing. Poll local tavern owners for agreement. Should we hire waitresses? - Good rapport with Farmers' Market administration. - Vandalism by ejected patrons is being investigate by City Police. Car license number in known. Jazz committee meets next week to finalize June Frog Island plans - Sunday program, shared costs, etc.

KIDDER, PEABODY AND COMPANY - offers free speaker service on investment counseling. Refer to Foundation.

MICHIGAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS - survey results read. State-wide conference planned.



The weekly newspaper award by the Small Business Foundation went to Roger Schillerstrom of Crain's Chicago Business.

DIRECTORY - reprinting recommendations will be made at the April meeting.

INTERN - contracts with UM or EMU will be reported in April.

GREAT TRAIN SHOW - for Heritage Festival is on the right track, with Schmidt's Antiques investigating promoting and managing the QUILT SHOW.

FESTIVAL PARADE - will turn at Huron Street and pass through Depot Town. (Could they make it down this month's disputed alley?)

MEDIA BLITZ - in August being planned with Chamber of Commerce's Charles Kehler and Jerry Meadows.

After attending a conference on 'how to publish a community newsletter; Meadows nominated The Rag and its producers for the BEST YET AWARD. THE GOLDEN GOOSE AWARD to the City of Ypsilanti for dragging its feet for nearly three years on the north-side alley plan.

Adjourned: 9:05 p.m.

COPIES

Enlargements and Reductions

5¢
(Over 50 Copies)

Hansen's
STANDARD PRINTING
35 E. Cross • 483-0339

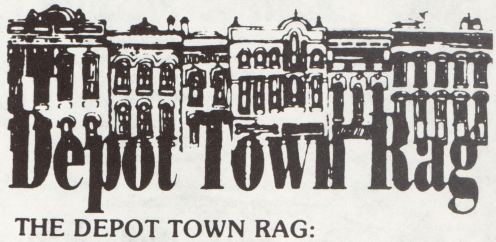
Dear Rag:

Your topographical/geographic lesson last month had a few holes in it. The Base Line is not at the top of Michigan's "southernmost counties," but at the top of the second tier of counties.

Other holes in your proposition: what about those portions of Ypsilanti Township which are between the City and Superior Township?

Do township fire engines go through the City to get there? What if Murdock refuses to let them in? Might they have to go via Mackinac Island to find someone who will cooperate with Ron Allen?

Just wondering. *Constant Reader*



THE DEPOT TOWN RAG:
A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc., a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.
The Depot Town Association, Inc.
Gary McKeever, President
The Caboose, 400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

WCA Washtenaw Council for the Arts

WHEW! Thank goodness that miserable front page is over and done with. It certainly isn't much fun printing bad news. Actually, it was hard to make some of it sound bad! As we continue on to our other five pages, we'll revert to our usually up-beat disposition. One page of negativism is about all we can handle.

A CATERED AFFAIR

Classic Limousine Services pulled up to the DTA Caboose on Saturday, March first with a limo-load of ten-year olds:

"Thanks, so much. The ten-year-old girls, guest of Birthday Girl, Shannon Hudson, had a great time. Played games, their portable tapes, and ate ice cream and cake. Charlotte's Kitchen catered a large party sub. The girls arrived in a white super-stretch limo. - Lenore Currie"

The Old Caboose is a great place for small parties and meetings of up to a dozen people. Candlelight catered dinners in a one-hundred-year-old caboose are incredibly romatic – and all for only $15. Call 482-6371 to make your reservation.

DEPOT EXCHANGE ANTIQUES
34 East Cross Street
Professional Furniture Stripping & Rrefinishing
10% off to RAG Readers
WE BUY AND SELL ANTIQUES

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$1000 REWARD OFFERED For Return of Train Depot Sign

Churck Muer, owner of the Gandy Dancer Restaurant in Ann Arbor, wants to have an historic, art nouveau sign returned to its place on the south roof of the restaurant . . and he's willing to pay $1000 to do it.

When Muer purchased the Depot in 1969, the beautiful, historic sign had adorned the building, noting the distances to each of the Buffalo and Chicago terminal points on the Michigan Central line. The sign had decorated the Depot for over 80 years.

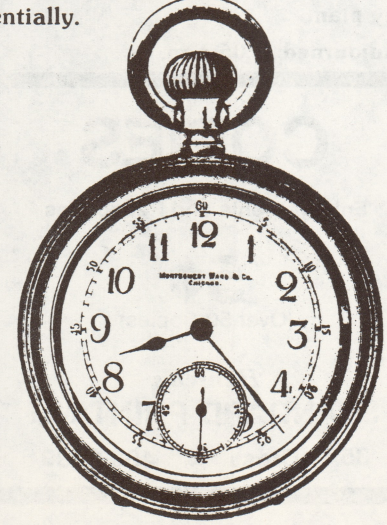
But, during the Labor Day weekend of 1970, the sign mysteriously disappeared. Muer is confident the sign is still in southeastern Michigan and he is willing to pay the $1000 reward for its safe return.

This summer an historic celebration is planned to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Depot. Muer would like to dedicate and reinstall the sign to its original location as part of this "Great Station Celebration", scheduled for the weekend of June 7 -8. "This historic event and celebration will be incomplete without this major depot fixture." he reports.

The "Great Station Celebration" planned at Ann Arbor's Michigan Central Railroad Depot will also include the transporting of an old steam locomotive to the Gandy Dancer, railroad exhibits, horse and buggy rides, a 1880's dance presentation, old-fashioned decorations and a brunch to benefit historical buildings in Ann Arbor.

The $1000 bounty can be donated to a selected charity, if the person returning the sign wishes to do so.

If you have information regarding the sign please contact Tavi Fulkerson at the Fulkerson Group at 663-9863. All information will be handled confidentially.



CITY DELAY CREATES ALLEY FIGHT

When the City passed its resolution for the creation of a straight alley on the north side of Cross Street in August of 1983, nobody thought it would take this long for them to put it into effect.

Some changes had already taken place with the development of the Farmers' Market plaza and agreements were made with adjacent property owners for changes in parking and traffic patterns. What everyone had been calling an alley was, in effect, the remnants of a rail spur which had been removed and used as an alley ever since. It had never been properly 'dedicated' by the City. Meantime, porches and additions to buildings had encroached upon that space.

Finally, in 1983, the City passed Resolution No. 83-193: That the proposed Ordianance entitled "An Ordinance to Vacate the South four feet or an existing 20 foot alley and right-of-way, said existing alley being immediately North of the 'Follett House' property and other properties with common addresses of 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 35, 37, 39, and 41 East Cross Street, said alley running East and West and (a/k/a Market Place) to the West" in accordance with the attached right of way agreements, be placed on final reading." (Ayes: 10, Nays 0, absent: 1 Vote: Unanimous.)

Some properties conformed to the new ruling, putting up their own signs to explain things. The City eventually posted a one-way sign (at the wrong end of the alley, for a while), but other properties changed hands and didn't pass the information on to new owners or managers. They parked in the old alley and in the new alley. Every now and then someone would ask at an Association meeting whetever happened to 'the alley plan?"

With all this contradiction of space use, the alley was often blocked by parkers who had every reason to believe they were doing nothing wrong, since no stripes or signs were ever put in place by the City.

Last month the City began to move to finalize the three-year-old project and many newer business owners and managers were surprised to find that they did not have as many parking spaces as they thought. Some even suggested that they thought it was the purpose of the Association to enforce City ordinances. (It might have been more efficient if DTA had done so.)

Hippity, hoppity,
Dippity doo!
In old Depot Town
What really is new?

A beauty shop:
Manicure, perm and shampoo
At twenty-five East Cross
And it's called "Depot Doo!"

Linda Lister and husband Bill have opened DEPOT DOO HAIR DESIGN, the first beauty shop on the block in many years. Son Shaun quickly became a Depot Town Kid, helping out at THE Market and enrolling in painting classes at The Plastercraft Shop.

RAGTIME

Fooling Around

DOWN IN DEPOT TOWN

The Cricket Box
a specialty gift & card shop
27 east cross street
COME SEE US!

THE CRICKET BOX opened on March first and has been inundated with new and old friends. Owners, Dave and Marge Gauntlett, have long been active with the Ypsilanti Historical Museum. Daughter and son-in-law Molley and Russ Nieves are co-owners in the enterprise which deals in gifts, antiques, greeting cards and other lovely items.

T.H.E. MARKET has expanded its operation to include gourmet deli items, in addition to the neighborhood grocery concept which has managed to serve this old block for several years. John Corday and Jacques Renou took over the operation from the Packers. They drive all the way from another small town, Stockbridge. Welcome to the block.

Bob Packer has extracted his pills and vitamins and moved them down the street to the address next to dad Ray's store, THE STORE. Bob's new place is tiny,efficient and elegant, too. The VITAMIN SHOPPE boasts the block's newest installation of neon, as well. Lookin' good, Depot Town!

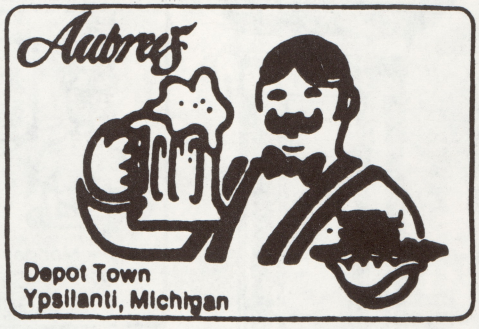
Richard C. Laflin
bd
310 N. River
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
487-1510
B & D RETAIL PLUMBING
and HEATING, INC.

Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market
in historic Depot Town

ON EXHIBIT - "Michigan Farming - Endangered Resource" Land, Food & Justice Committee
SATURDAY EVENTS:
4/5 4/19 - "Ken Croft and Friends" sing country 9-12
4/12 "Growing Backyard Herbs" demo & free starts 9 - 12
4/19 April Spring Craft Show! 8 - 3
4/26 "Kidscrafts" crafts by recycling

Miller's
ICE CREAM
42 E. Cross Ypsilanti, Michigan
485-7548
WEEKLY SPECIALS
Come in and enjoy your first cone of the season ! ! !
Always a Double Dip Special for 75¢

Aubree's has established a contract with the Ypsilanti Ford Motor Company for a series of Statistics Methods Analysis workshops. They meet upstairs on Mondays and Wednesdays for morning and afternoon programs and will continue through July when they will negotiate to renew another series of sessions. Aubree's owner, Bill French, says his business has increased fifty per cent due, primarily, to the Ford contract which began in March.



FOOD CO-OP CELEBRATES ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

April 9th will mark the 11th year since the Ypsilanti Food Cooperative incorporated to open its first storefront on Sheridan. The Co-op had previously operated as an informal buying club without a storefront. After opening the store on Sheridan, the Co-op later moved to Perrin Street, near the EMU campus. Business was conducted there until the move to Depot Town in February, 1984.

Join the Co-op in celebrating its anniversary on Saturday, April 12. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Cooking Encounters will present Alternatives for Birthdays. The Co-op birthday cake will be cut at 12 noon. Stop by for a sample, along with free coffee or tea. Tim Wise will be there with his magic show, and the co-op clown will have balloons for the kids. Birthday specials will be featured all week long, beginning Monday, April 7.

The Co-op is located at 312 North River. Call 483-1520 for more information. Contact: Corrine Sikorski 483-1520 or Suzanne Hallett 481-1229.

Eggs Milk Grains Produce Nuts Dried Fruits
Pasta Breads Juices Goats Milk Tempeh
Herbs Canned Goods Teas Spices
Yogurt Tofu Beans
YPSI FOOD COOP
312 N. River 483-1520
Sun. 12 - 4 Mon - Fri 10 - 7 Sat. 9 - 6